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Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta Sutta

The Discourse on Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta | A 6.60

Theme: The dangers of a monastic socializing
Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2014, 2017

1 Introduction

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

1.1.1 The Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta Sutta (A 6.60) highlights two important monastic themes:

- (1) a monastic, especially a novice monk (*navaka, bhikkhu*)—one who is 5 “rains” (monastic years) or less—should keep to his tutelage (*nissaya*) or basic monastic training [§4];
- (2) no matter how good a monk is in meditation, even being able to attain all the 4 dhyanas (*jhāna*) and the “signless concentration of mind” (*animitta ceto, samādhi*)—which refers to “Vipassanā” or “in-sight practice” or, perhaps, even the attaining of the formless dhyanas [§50; 1.2.2], if he socializes with anyone—whether monastic or not, the elite or the commoner, Buddhist or not—he is likely to fail in his monastic training, even leave the order, as in the case of Citta.

1.1.2 In the case of Citta Hatthi,sari,putta, he seems determined to remain a monk, or he is naturally drawn to the life of renunciation, so that, although he joins the order six times and leaves six times, only in the seventh renunciation, he goes into solitary retreat and becomes an arhat [§66]. This Sutta records his last renunciation. It is likely that in his last renunciation, he renounces before the Buddha himself. [2]

1.2 SUTTA HIGHLIGHTS

1.2.1 How socializing harms the renunciant’s life

1.2.1.1 Being a renunciant is about seeing the world (especially our physical senses) just as they are—impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise—and not being deluded by them, that is, seeing them to be *more* than what they really are. A monastic spends at least the first 5 years of his monkhood training (as a “novice monk,” *navaka bhikkhu*) with a teacher in an ambience of monastic living, so that the monastic actually *becomes* a true renunciant [§7].

1.2.1.2 The same passage [§7] warns us that “some person may be the mildest of the mild, the humblest of the humble, the calmest of the calm” while under tutelage. This may well truly reflect the inner nature of the neophyte or monastic with proper spiritual guidance. But appearances can deceive, especially when the trainee lacks the wholesomeness and strength of the tutelage and monastic ambience.

Furthermore, when this same person breaks tutelage or forgets his monastic state, “and dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians” [§8], such **intimacy** corrupts him, due to falling back into worldly ways—“devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life” [§9].

1.2.1.3 The monastic, unable to keep the world out of his mind, is drawn back into the world—he disrobes and becomes a layman again. The Sutta goes on to warn that even when a monastic is able to meditate well, attaining up to the 4th dhyana or even higher [§41]—but he sees that attainment more as

an “achievement,” instead of being a training or tool in spiritual renunciation: he *identifies* with his “attainment” [§§15, 24, 33, 42, 51].

In other words, the monastic or meditator gets caught up in a delusion or mindset of **status**. He measures himself against other monastics or meditators, and his associates and companions, too: he is overcome by conceit (*māna*).¹ He measures himself against others and fancies himself as being more than what he really is, that he is superior to others.

As we tend to behave just like the people we habitually associate with (when we are not spiritually strong), then, we will fall back into the ways of the world, no matter how advanced we are in our meditation: we are yet neither awakened nor free from our defilements. **Socializing** with the world pushes the renunciant back into the world to become a part of it again. He has backslided.

1.2.2 The signless concentration of mind

1.2.2.1 The Citta Hatthi,sari,putta Sutta (A 6.60) states that no matter how good a monastic may be in his meditation—even able to attain all the 4 dhyanas [§§14, 23, 32, 41], or even attaining the level of the “signless concentration of mind” (*animitta ceto,samādhi*) [§48]—he can still fall back into the world and fail as a renunciant. The reason is that the meditations are only part of his training, a tool, in his path out of the world to reach the path of awakening. He is, so to speak, still “not out of the woods” of lust and worldliness.

1.2.2.2 The signless concentration of mind (*animitta ceto,samādhi*) is glossed by the Commentary as “the samadhi of strong insight” (*balava,vipassana,samādhim*, AA 3:402); it is a “an insight-based concentration” when we have abandoned the signs of permanence, etc (SA 3:90). In essence, this is what we today know as “Vipassana” practice, especially in its profound sense of watching “rise and fall of phenomena.”² This is not a separate form of meditation, but simply an aspect of our meditation, especially on emerging from deep meditation and using our calm and clear mind to observe or examine the true reality before us.

1.2.2.3 Since it is a “**signless**” (*animitta*) meditation—meaning here, it goes beyond the dhyanic meditation and its “form-based” meditation sign³ and the lessening of the dhyana-factors (*jhān’āṅga*)⁴—we may surmise that this includes the formless dhyanas (*arūpa-j,jhāna*), too, even if such attainments are likely to be rare in the case of the monastic neophytes. In other words, even when we have attained the formless dhyanas—but we are not awakened (free from all mental defilements)—it is likely that we can fall back into worldliness.

For this reason, we can understand why **moral virtue training** (*sīla,sikkhā*) is vital as the foundation for concentration training (*samādhi,sikkhā*). Moral virtue restrains and disciplines our body and speech from worldly ways, which conduces to keeping the mind ever ready for meditation, or at least provides the space free from worldliness.

¹ This is one of the 3 kinds of self-views, underpinning the threefold graspings (*gaha*): see **Me: The nature of conceit**, SD 19.2a.

² **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16,2.25.3/2:100, of the Buddha), SD 9; **Mahā Vedalla S** (M 43,34/1:298, a monk; it is called *animitta ceto,vimutti*, “signless freedom of mind”), SD 30.2; **Animitta Ceto,samādhi Pañha S** (S 40.9,4-7/-4:269 ×3, a monk) + SD 24.19; **Go,datta S** (S 41.7/4:297, a monk), SD 60.4; (**Satipaṭṭhāna**) **Gilāna S** (S 47.9/5:154, the Buddha), SD 76.12; **Citta Hatthi,sāriputta S** (A 6.60,42/3:397, 398×2, some person), SD 51.9, **Tissa Brahmā S** (A 7.53/4:78×2, a monk), SD 54.5. See also S:B 1921 n141.

³ See **Nimitta**, SD 19.7. On *animitta*, see **Cūḷa Suññata S** (M 121), SD 11.3 (8); SD 24.19 (4).

⁴ On the dhyana-factors (*jhān’āṅga*), see SD 8.4 (6).

1.2.2.4 The commentary on **the Citta Hatthi,sari,putta Sutta** explains the “signless concentration of mind” as “the samadhi of strong insight” (*balava,vipassana,samādhim*, AA 3:402) [1.2.2.2]. In other words, it is a kind of concentration that examines the nature of phenomena in terms of the 3 universal characteristics—as being impermanent, unsatisfactory and non-self (especially as being *impermanent*).⁵

The term “signless concentration of mind” is also mentioned in **the Animitta Ceto,samādhi Pañha Sutta** (S 40.9).⁶ The Saṃyutta commentary (SA 3:90) on this Sutta similarly explains it as deep insight concentration. Since such a concentration is mind-made or volitionally constructed, it is clearly impermanent.

Furthermore, as the Citta Hatthi,sari,putta Sutta (A 6.60) points out, lust (*rāga*) in an unawakened person is likely to arise again. To illustrate this point, Mahā Koṭṭhita uses the parable of the crickets to show how, when the forest is crowded by an army, its noisiness drowns the crickets’ chirping. The chirping, however, can be heard again once the forest is deserted. Even so, those who have attained the signless concentration of mind may be assailed by lustful thoughts when they are unmindful.

1.2.3 The signless freedom of mind (animitta ceto,vimutti)

1.2.3.1 Clearly, the term *animitta ceto,samādhi* is used in the Citta Hatthi,sari,putta Sutta in a limited sense to refer to a concentration that is either non-dhyanic or post-dhyanic. This term should be distinguished from ***animitta ceto,vimutti***, “the signless liberation of mind,” which is found, for example, in **the (Nissaraṇā) Mettā Sutta** (A 6.13). Curiously, its commentary glosses it *in the same way*, as “strong insight” (*balava,vipassana*), but it also notes that the Dīgha Reciters (*dīgha,bhāṇaka*) “say that it refers to the fruition attainment of arhathood” (*dīgha,bhāṇakā pana arahatta,phala,samāpattī vadanti*)⁷ (AA 3:346). The (Nissaraṇā) Mettā Sutta adds that when the signless liberation of mind is *fully mastered*, it is impossible that the mind would fall under the power of a mental sign again.⁸

Clearly then, we should note that in the Citta Hatthi,sari,putta Sutta (and similar contexts), only “concentration” (*samādhi*) is meant—this is a temporary state, which we can lose through unmindfulness. On the other hand, the term *animitta ceto,vimutti*, “the signless freedom of mind,” refers to the freedom of the fruition of arhathood, which is permanent. [1.2.3.2]

1.2.3.2 The signless freedom of mind (animitta ceto,vimutti) is the attainment of fruition of arhathood (*arahatta,phala,samāpatti*). The signs (*nimitta*) are objects such as forms. The “signless element” (*animitta,dhātu*) is nirvana itself in which all signs of conditioned things are absent. (MA 2:352)

As such, says **the (Brahmā) Tissa Sutta** (A 7.53), a monk who dwells in a suitable place, associating with spiritual friends, controlling his faculties, and who cultivates the signless concentration of mind (*animitta ceto,samādhi*), will be able to realize the goal of the spiritual life.⁹ In this context, despite its impermanent nature, *the signless concentration of mind* is declared in **the Suññata Samādhi Sutta** (S 43.4) to be the path to nirvana.¹⁰

⁵ On the 3 characteristics, see SD 1.2 (2).

⁶ S 40.9/4:268 f (SD 24.19).

⁷ *Animittā ceto,vimuttīti arahatta,phala,samāpatti*, DA 3:1036; the same at MA 2:352 on **Mahā Vedalla S** (M 43,27/1:298), SD 30.2. **Mahā Parinibbāna S** comy, too, says it is “fruition attainment” (DA 2:548).

⁸ A 6.13/3:292 (SD 60.2).

⁹ A 7.53/4:78 (SD 54.5).

¹⁰ S 43.4/4:360 (SD 55.8).

1.3 RELATED PARABLES

1.3.1 The Sutta's parables

1.3.1.1 Here is a comparative table on the parables for the dhyanas as found in **the Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta Sutta** (A 6.60) and **the Sāmañña,phala Sutta** (D 2):

	<u>Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta Sutta</u> (A 6.60)	<u>Sāmañña,phala Sutta</u> (D 2) ¹¹
The 1 st dhyana [§§17-19]	Crossroads dust returns after the rain	Debtor repays loan and has surplus
The 2 nd dhyana [§§26-28]	Pond bottom can be seen after rain	Sick man recovers and enjoys food
The 3 rd dhyana [§§35-37]	A hungry person will eat stale food	Prisoner is free, his wealth is safe
The 4 th dhyana [§§44-46]	Winds make waves on mountain lake	Freed slave goes wherever he like
The signless concentration [§§53-55]	Cricket sounds return when it is quiet	(None)

1.3.1.2 It should be noted here that while the Sāmañña,phala Sutta parables refer to the dhyanas themselves, the Citta Hatthi,sari,putta Sutta parables refer to moral lapses in the meditator. Even with deep meditation, under negative conditions, the unmindful monastic will pollute his mind, forget the Dharma and return to lay-life.

1.3.2 The parable of the murky pond

1.3.2.1 Here are two related parables of pond water reflecting the nature of the mind, whether it is murky [1.3.2] or it is clear [1.3.3]. The Commentary explains that the water being “cloudy” (*avilena*) refers to its being stirred up by the 5 mental hindrances:

(1) desire for sensual pleasures,	<i>kāma-c,chanda</i>	
(2) ill will,	<i>vyāpāda</i>	
(3) sloth and torpor,	<i>thīna,middha</i>	
(4) restlessness and guilt, and	<i>uddhacca,kukkucca</i>	
(5) doubt. ¹²	<i>vicikicchā</i>	(AA 1:58)

1.3.2.2 **The 5 mental hindrances** (*pañca,nīvaraṇa*) are discussed, in some detail, in two near-identical discourses—the **(Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava Sutta** (S 46.55) and **the (Manta) Saṅgārava Sutta** (A 5.193), in terms of how they negatively affect our memory and learning. However, in the section of doubt (*vicikicchā*), cloudy water is identified with doubt, while limpid water with the freedom from doubt.¹³

1.3.2.3 Here we will examine the term *uttariṃ manussa,dhammā alam-ariya,ñāna,dassana,vise-saṃ*, which is found in both **the Āvila Udaka,rahada Sutta** (A 1.5.5,4) [below] and **the Accha Udaka,rahada Sutta** (A 1.5.6,4) [1.3.3]. This long compound actually comprises two terms (1) *uttari,manussa*

¹¹ **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2) parables are from D 2,70+71+72+73+74 (SD 8.10) respectively, where see for details.

¹² See **Nīvaraṇa**, SD 32.1.

¹³ S 46.55,8/5:124 f + 14/5:125 (SD 3.12) & A 5.193(5)/3:233 (SD 73.3)

dhamma, “superhuman states” and (2) *alam-ariya,ñāṇa.dassana,visesa*, “the distinction of knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones.”

(1) The Commentary treats *uttarim manussa,dhammā* or *uttari,manussa,dhamma* as a complex ablative phrase relative to (or, in effect, arising from) *alam-ariya,ñāṇa.dassana,visesaṃ*.¹⁴ The latter, “the distinction that is the knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones” brings about the “superhuman states.” Or, the “superhuman states” are the contents of “the distinction that is the knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones.”

The Commentary explains that “*Superhuman* means ‘Superior to human virtue comprising the 10 wholesome courses of action.’¹⁵ For, this tenfold virtue is called ‘human virtue’ because it is undertaken by people on their own—even without anyone encouraging them—after being moved by a sense of urgency at the end of ‘the sword-period’ (global war) (*satth’antara,kappa*, D 3:73,4). The things superior to this are the dhyanas, insight, the paths and the fruits.” (AA 1:58)

This last group of qualities—the dhyanas (*jhāna*), insight (*vipassanā*), that is, the 3 direct knowledges (*abhiññā*), and the paths and fruitions (*maggā,phala*), that is, the various levels of awakening—constitute the distinctive qualities of the saints, and, hence, form a well-known set. These states are subject of the 4th defeat or Pārājika rule: any monastic who publicly and falsely claims attainments at once forfeit their monastic state and revert to the low life.¹⁶

(2) In “the distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones,” the distinction (*visesa*) is that of *the knowledge and vision that is worthy of the noble ones* or able to produce the noble state. *Ñāṇa* itself is “knowledge” (*ñāṇa*) in that it *knows* true reality, and it is called “vision” (*dassana*) in that it *sees* true reality. This is a designation for the knowledges of “the divine eye (knowledge of rebirth), insight knowledge, path knowledge, fruition knowledge, and review knowledge.”¹⁷ In simple terms, the whole phrase, as used in the suttas, refers to the progressively higher degrees of spiritual knowledge characteristic of the saints, especially the attainment of the supramundane path (the stages of awakening itself).

SD 51.9(1.3.2)

Āvila Udaka,rahada Sutta

The Discourse on the Murky Pond | A 1.5.5/1:9 [A:B 1.45]
A 1.5.5 = Aṅguttara Nikāya 1, Ekanipāta 5, Paṇihita Vagga 5
Theme: A clouded mind will not awaken

- 1 Bhikshus, suppose there were a pond whose water is murky, turbid, muddied.¹⁸
- 2 Then, a man with good eyes, standing on the bank, would not be able to see the shells, gravel and pebbles, or shoals of fish swimming about or remaining still.¹⁹
- 3 What is the reason for this?
Because, bhikshus, of the murkiness of the water.

¹⁴ The cpd occurs at **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,34 +43 etc), SD 49.1; (**Anuruddha**) **Upakkilesa S** (M 128,15), SD 5.18; (**Pabbajita**) **Abhiṇha S** (A 10.48,2(10) SD 48.9.

¹⁵ **Sammā Ditṭhi S** (M 9,6/1:47), SD 11.14; elaborated in **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41,12-14/1:287 f), SD 5.7.

¹⁶ V 3:87-109, def at V 3:92; also mentioned at **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36,30/1:246), SD 49.4.

¹⁷ *Dibba,cakkhum pi vipassanā pi maggo pi phalam pi paccavekkhaṇa,ñānam pi sabbaññūta,ñānam pi vuccati* (MA 2:21 = AA 1:58).

¹⁸ *Seyyathā’pi bhikkhave udaka,rahado āvilo luḷito kalalī,bhūto.*

¹⁹ *Tattha cakkhumā puriso tīre thito na passeyya sippi,sambukam pi [vl sippi,kasambukam pi] sakkhara,kaṭhalam pi maccha,gumbam pi carantam pi tiṭṭhantam pi.*

4 So, too, bhikshus, that a monk with cloudy mind will indeed know his own good, or the good of others, or the good of both, or to realize the superhuman state²⁰ that is the distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones²¹—this is impossible.²²

5 What is the reason for this?

Because, bhikshus, of the murkiness [cloudiness] of the mind.²³

— evaṃ —

1.3.3 The parable of the clear pond

SD 51.9(1.3.3)

Accha Udaka,rahada Sutta

The Discourse on the Clear Pond | A 1.5.6/1:9 [A:B 1.46]
A 1.5.6 = Aṅguttara Nikāya 1, Ekanipāta 5, Paṇihita Vagga 6
Theme: A clear mind will be able to awaken

1 Bhikshus, suppose there were a pond whose water is clear, still, limpid.²⁴

2 Then, a man with good eyes, standing on the bank, would be able to see the shells, gravel and pebbles, or shoals of fish swimming about or remaining still.²⁵

3 What is the reason for this?

Because, bhikshus, of the clarity of the water.

4 So, too, bhikshus, that a monk with clear mind will indeed know his own good, or the good of others, or the good of both, or to realize the superhuman state that is the distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones²⁶—this is possible.

5 What is the reason for this?

Because, bhikshus, of the clarity [non-cloudiness] of the mind.²⁷

— evaṃ —

²⁰ “The superhuman state,” or “transhuman state,” *uttariṃ manussa,dhammā*: see (1.3.2.3).

²¹ “The distinction in knowledge and vision worth of the noble ones,” *alam-ariya,ñāṇa,dassana,visesa*: see (1.3.2.3).

²² *Evam evaṃ kho bhikkhave so vata bhikkhu āvilena cittena att’atthaṃ vā ñassati paratthaṃ vā ñassati ubhay’-atthaṃ vā ñassati uttariṃ vā manussa,dhammā alam-ariya,ñāṇa,dassana,visesaṃ sacchikarissatīti n’etaṃ ṭhānaṃ vijjati.*

²³ *Āvilattā bhikkhave cittassāti.* For a description of a calm and clear mind (free of the 5 hindrances) ready for instruction, see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,85.1 passim), SD 8.10.

²⁴ *Seyyathā’pi bhikkhave udaka,rahado accho vippasanno anāvilo.*

²⁵ *Tattha cakkhumā puriso tīre ṭhito passeyya sippi,sambukam pi sakkhara,kaṭhalam pi maccha,gumbam pi carantam pi tiṭṭhantam pi.*

²⁶ On *uttariṃ vā manussa,dhammā alam-ariya,ñāṇa,dassana,visesaṃ*, see (1.3.2.3) n.

²⁷ *Anāvilattā bhikkhave cittassāti.*

2 Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta

2.1 CONFLICT WITH MAHĀ KOṬṬHITA

Citta,²⁸ the son of the elephant-trainer, an intelligent man, first joins the sangha, studying under the Buddha himself and gains special skill in distinguishing subtle differences in the meaning of words. Despite his attainment, he has difficulties with the Order. Six times he leaves the Order and six times re-joins it.

His last conflict is with Mahā Koṭṭhita, who objects to his constant interruption of the elder's discussions on the Dharma (*abhidhamma,kathā*)²⁹ with Mahā Moggallāna (**Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta Sutta**).³⁰ After falling out with Mahā Koṭṭhita, Citta seeks refuge with his friend, the brahmin Poṭṭhapāda, who, according to Buddhaghosa, brings him along to meet the Buddha,³¹ with the express purpose of reconciling him with the monks (DA 2:378 f).

2.2 SEVENTH RENUNCIATION

Citta's final renunciation is recorded both in **Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta Sutta** [§60] and the **Poṭṭhapāda Sutta** (D 9).³² The Commentaries recount the story of why Citta went forth seven times. In the time of Kassapa Buddha (the one before Gotama), he and another friend were monks. When his companion was dissatisfied with monkhood, Citta, coveting his companion monastic requisites, spoke in praise of the householder's life to a monk, inducing him to leave the Order. As a result, in his last life, he left the Order six times before his last ordination whereby he gained spiritual liberation.³³

2.3 PERSONS NAMED "CITTA" IN THE TEXTS

The Dictionary of Pali Proper Names (DPPN) lists seven people and a deer named Citta:

- (1) **Citta Hatthi,roha,putta** (or **Hatthi,sāri,putta**), the son of the elephant trainer, who appears in the **Poṭṭhapāda Sutta** (D 9), where the Buddha admonished him and his arhathood is mentioned.³⁴
- (2) **Citta Gaha,pati**, the layman, a houselord of Macchikā,saṅḍa, where he was treasurer, said to be foremost among the laymen who teach the Dharma (S 17.23/2:235 f, 41.1-10/4:281-304; A 1.14.6/1:26).
- (3) **Citta**, the Bodhisattva born as an outcast (*caṇḍāla*) whose details are given in the **Citta Sambhūta Jātaka** (J 498).
- (4) **Citta(ka)**, a deer, brother of Rohanta, the Bodhisattva, and who is identified with Ānanda. See **Rohanta,miga Jātaka** (J 501).
- (5) **Citta**, one of the chief lay supporters of Sujāta Buddha (B 13.30).
- (6) **Citta the mad**, an elder of Sri Lanka who fell in love with queen Damiḷa Devī and went mad after she died, denying her death all along, earning him the nickname of **Ummattaka Citta** (the mad) (AA 1:22).
- (7) **Citta the herdsman**, servant of Dīgha,gāmaṇī (Mahv 9.22 f; MahvṬ 278).

²⁸ For a list of other "Cittas" in the Canon, see below (2.3).

²⁹ On the canonical usage of the prefix *abhi-*, see SD 7.14 (6.1) n on *abhisāñña,nirodha*.

³⁰ A 6.60/3:392-399; DA 2:378.

³¹ **Poṭṭhapādā S** (D 9,32), SD 7.14.

³² D 9,56/1:202 f (SD 7.14).

³³ MA 2:378 f; AA 3:402. For details of Citta's first renunciation, see **Kuddāla Jātaka** (J 70/1:311-315) and **Citta-hattha Vatthu** in the Dhammapada Comy (DhA 3.4/1:305-313).

³⁴ D 9,32-56/1:190-203 (SD 7.14).

- (8) **Citta Mah'āmatta**, a courtier who hung a gong outside his house so that any monk in need of any requisites could ring for them at any time (VbhA 341).

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The Discourse on Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta

A 6.60

Thus have I heard.

- 1 At one time, the Blessed One was staying in the deer park at Isi,patana, outside Benares.

Citta Hattha,sāri,putta interrupts a discussion

2 Now, at that time, some elder monks, on returning from their almsround, after their meal, assembled and sat together in the pavilion³⁵ discussing matters relating to the Dharma.³⁶

3 Now, while the elder monks were engaged in discussing matters relating to the Dharma, the venerable Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta keeps interrupting the discussion.³⁷

4 Then, the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhita [Mahā Koṭṭhika] said to the venerable Citta Hatthi,Sāri,putta: “Please, venerable Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta, do not **[393]** *interrupt the elder monks while they are engaged in discussing matters relating to the Dharma*. Let the venerable Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta wait until the end of the discussion.”

The reaction of Citta's companions

5 When this was said, the venerable Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta's companions said to the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhita:

“Let the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhita not blame the venerable Citta Hari,sāri,putta.³⁸ The venerable Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta is learned, and the venerable Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta is capable of engaging in the elders' discussion of matters relating to the Dharma!”³⁹

6 “Difficult it is, indeed, avuso, to know this for one who knows not the course of mind of another.⁴⁰

³⁵ “Pavilion,” *maṇḍala,māḷa, vi ~māla* (Skt *maṇḍala,māḍa*; “a circular house or hall with a peaked roof, a pavilion,” DPL, PED): prob simply a circular open hall large enough to accommodate a few hundred people. For details, see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,10.4) n, SD 8.10.

³⁶ *Tena kho pana samayena sambahulā therā bhikkhū pacchā,bhattaṃ piṇḍapāta,paṭikkantā maṇḍala,māḷe sanisinnā sannipatitā abhidhamma,kathaṃ kathenti*. On *abhidhamma* as “relating to the Dharma,” see SD 26.1 (1.1). See also A:B 1765 n1387, 1733 n1086.

³⁷ *Tatra sudarṃ āyasmā citto hatthi,sāriputto therānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ abhidhamma,kathaṃ kathentānaṃ antar'antarā kathaṃ opātetī*. Ce Be Se *opātetī*; Ee *opātesī* (aor). Comy: Having interrupted their discussions, he gave his own explanations (*tesaṃ kathaṃ vicchindivā attano kathaṃ kathenti*, AA 3:401).

³⁸ *Māyasmā mahā,koṭṭhito āyasmantaṃ cittaṃ hatthi,sāriputtaṃ apasādesī*.

³⁹ *Paṇḍito āyasmā citto hatthi,sāriputto pahoti c'āyasmā citto hatthi,sāriputto therānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ abhidhamma,kathaṃ kathetun'ti*.

⁴⁰ *Dujjānaṃ kho etaṃ āvuso parassa ceto,pariyāyaṃ ajānantehi*.

(1) Socializing

7 Here, avuso, some person seems to be the mildest of the mild, the humblest of the humble, the calmest of the calm while he lives in dependence with the teacher or a fellow brahmachari in the role of a teacher.⁴¹

8 But then, he is drawn away from the teacher, drawn away from the fellow brahmachari in the role of a teacher,

and **dwells intimately** with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.⁴²

9 On account of his dwelling in such intimacy, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.⁴³

PARABLE OF THE CROP-DEVOURING BULL⁴⁴

10 Suppose, avuso, a **corn-devouring bull** was bound to a rope or shut up in a pen.⁴⁵

Now, avuso, if one were to say thus: ‘Now, the corn-devouring bull will never again enter among the corn?’—speaking thus, avuso, would one be speaking rightly?’

11 “Certainly not, avuso!⁴⁶ It is possible, avuso, that the corn-devouring bull, having broken the rope or having broken out of the pen, would enter among the corn.”

12 So, too, avuso, *here some person [394] seems to be the mildest of the mild, the humblest of the humble, the calmest of the calm, while he lives in dependence with the teacher or a fellow brahmachari in the role of a teacher.* [§7]

13 *On account of his dwelling in such intimacy, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.*

(2) The 1st dhyana

14 Now, avuso, here, some person,
quite secluded [detached] from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome mental states,
attains and dwells in **the 1st dhyana**,
accompanied by initial application and sustained application, and
with zest and joy born of solitude.⁴⁷

⁴¹ *Idh’āvuso ekacco puggalo tāvad eva sorata, sorato hoti, nivāta, nivāto hoti, upasant’upasanto hoti, yāva satthāram upanissāya viharati aññataram vā garu-ṭ, ṭhāniyam sa, brahmacāriṃ.* Here, the word *upanissaya*, “in dependence (of),” specifically refers to a novice monk (one of 5 rains or less) who must live under the tutelage (*nissaya*) of a competent teacher, or, generally, to monastics (and others) living in the presence of a senior teacher, such as the Buddha. On *nissaya*, see SD 40a.8 (4.2.2.3).

⁴² *Yato ca kho so vapakassat’eva satthārā, vapakassati garu-ṭ, ṭhāniyehi sa, brahmacārihi, so samsattho viharati bhikkhūhi bhikkhunīhi upāsakehi upāsikāhi raññā raja, mahāmattehi titthiyehi titthiya, sāvakehi.* The vb *vapakassati*, “to be drawn away (from)” comes from the more familiar *vavakassati* (*vi*, “away” + *ava*, “down” + *√KRS*, to drag, plough), “to be drawn (away from), distracted or alienated (from)”; various vll: V 2:204 *apakāsanti avapakāsanti* = A 5:74 *avakassanti vavakassanti*; A 3:145, 393, 4:16.

⁴³ *Tassa samsatthassa vissatthassa pākatassa bhassam anuyuttassa viharato rāgo cittam anuddhamseti, so rāgānuddhammena cittena sikkham paccakkhāya hīnāy’āvattati.*

⁴⁴ For another parable involving a “crop-eating bull” (*goṇo kiṭṭh’ādo*), on the dangers of enticing sense-objects, see **Vīṇōpama S** (S 35.246/4:195 f), SD 91.15.

⁴⁵ *Seyyāthā’pi āvuso goṇo kiṭṭh’ādo dāmena vā baddho vaje vā oruddho.*

⁴⁶ Note the singular *avuso*: the monks are now addressing Mahā Koṭṭhita.

15 Thinking, “I’m a 1st dhyana attainer!” he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.

16 On account of his dwelling in such *intimacy*, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.

PARABLE OF THE CROSSROADS DUST

17 Suppose, avuso, **heavy rain** (in large drops) falling on the crossroads would clear away the dust and bring on mud.⁴⁸

18 Now, avuso, if one were to say thus: ‘The dust will never arise again here on this crossroads!’ — speaking thus, avuso, would one be speaking rightly?’

19 “Certainly not, avuso!⁴⁹ It is possible, avuso, that people will pass through this crossroads, or cattle (and goats)⁵⁰ will pass through, or that the wind and the sun’s heat will remove the moisture, so that the dust will reappear.⁵¹

20 So, too, avuso, here some person, quite secluded [detached] from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome mental states, attains and dwells in the 1st dhyana, accompanied by initial application and sustained application, and with zest and joy born of solitude.

21 Thinking, “I’m a 1st dhyana attainer,” he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians. [§15]

22 On account of his dwelling in such *intimacy*, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life. [395]

(3) The 2nd dhyana

23 Now, avuso, here, some person with the stilling of initial application and sustained application, by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, attains and dwells in **the 2nd dhyana**, free from initial application and sustained application, with zest and joy born of stillness [samadhi].⁵²

24 Thinking, “I’m a 2nd dhyana attainer!” he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.

⁴⁷ “Born of solitude,” *viveka,ja*; ie, it is the result of abandoning the hindrances: on the 3 kinds of solitude, see **The body in Buddhism**, SD 29.6a (1.5). On the omission of “one-pointedness of mind” (*cittassa ek’aggatā*) and “stillness” (*samādhi*) here, see **The layman and dhyana** (SD 8.5).

⁴⁸ *Seyyathā’pi āvuso cātu,mahā,pathe thulla,phusitako devo vassanto rajam antaradhāpeyya cikkhallam pātuka-reyya.*

⁴⁹ Note the singular *avuso*: the monks are now addressing Mahā Koṭṭhita.

⁵⁰ *Gopāsu*, which Comy glosses by “cattle and goats” (*Gāvo ca ajikā ca*, AA 3:401).

⁵¹ *No h’idaṃ āvuso thānaṃ h’etaṃ āvuso vijjati, yaṃ amusmiṃ cātumahāpathe manussā vā atikkameyyuṃ, gopasū vā atikkameyyuṃ, vāt’ātapo vā sneha,gataṃ pariyādiyeyya, atha punad eva rajo pātubhaveyyāti.*

⁵² The 2nd dhyana is known as “the noble silence” (*ariya,tuṇhī,bhāva*) because within it initial application and sustained application (thinking and discursion, *vitakka,vicāra*) cease, and with their cessation, speech cannot occur. (S 2:273); cf S 4:293 where *vitakka* and *vicāra* are called verbal formation (*vacī,saṅkhāra*), the mental factors responsible for speech. In **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 1:161), the Buddha exhorts the monks when assembled to “either speak on the Dharma or observe the noble silence” (ie either talk Dharma or meditate). See **Dutiya Jhāna Pañha S** (S 40.-2/4:263 f), SD 24.12a.

25 *On account of his dwelling in such intimacy, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.*

PARABLE OF RAIN ON THE POND⁵³

26 Suppose, avuso, not far from a village or market-town, there is a **great pond**. A heavy rain—in large drops—falls into it, so that the shells and snails,⁵⁴ the gravel and pebbles, too, disappear from sight.⁵⁵

27 Now, avuso, if one were to say thus: ‘The shells and snails, gravel and pebbles, too, will never appear again in this pond!’—speaking thus, avuso, would one be speaking rightly?’

28 “Certainly not, avuso! It is possible, avuso, that people will drink from this pond, or that cattle will drink from this pond, or that the wind and sun will remove the moisture, so that the shells, gravel and pebbles will reappear.

29 So, too, avuso, here *some person*
with the stilling of initial application and sustained application,
by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind,
attains and dwells in the 2nd dhyana,
free from initial application and sustained application,
with zest and joy born of stillness [samadhi].

30 Thinking, “**I’m a 2nd dhyana attainer!**” *he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.*

31 *On account of his dwelling in such intimacy, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.*

(4) The 3rd dhyana

32 Now, here, avuso, some person,
with the fading away of zest,
remains equanimous, mindful and clearly knowing, and
feels joy with the body.⁵⁶

He attains and dwells in the **3rd dhyana**,
of which the noble ones declare, ‘Happily he dwells in equanimity and mindfulness.’

33 Thinking, “**I’m a 3rd dhyana attainer!**” *he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.*

34 *On account of his dwelling in such intimacy, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.*

PARABLE OF SUMPTUOUS FOOD

35 Suppose, avuso, a person who has just taken a **sumptuous meal [396]** would not find food from the previous evening.⁵⁷

⁵³ Cf two other parables of ponds: one with turbid and muddy water, **Āvila Udaka,rahada S** (A 1.45/1:9) and the other with limpid water, **Accha Udaka,rahada S** (A 1.46/1:9).

⁵⁴ “Shells and snails” (*sippi,sambuka*), where PED def *sippi* as “oyster,” which is marine, and does not fit here, where it is a landlocked lake.

⁵⁵ *Seyyathā’pi āvuso gāmassa vā nigamassa vā avidūre mahantaṃ talākaṃ, tattha thulla,phusitako devo vuṭṭho sippi,sambukam pi sakkhara,kaṭhalam pi antaradhāpeyya.*

⁵⁶ On this point, see **The Buddha discovers dhyana** @ SD 33.1b (6.4.1): On coming out of dhyana.

⁵⁷ *Seyyathā’pi āvuso purisaṃ paṇīta,bhojanaṃ bhuttāvim ābhidosikaṃ bhojanaṃ na-c,chādeyya.*

36 Now, avuso, if one were to say thus: ‘Now food will never appeal to this man ever again!’ — speaking thus, avuso, would one be speaking rightly?”

37 “Certainly not, avuso! It is possible, avuso, that that person who has taken the sumptuous meal still has nutritive essence in his body, so that no other food will appeal to him.⁵⁸

But when his nutritive essence disappears, food will again appeal to him.

38 So, too, avuso, here, some person,
with the fading away of zest,
remains equanimous, mindful and clearly knowing, and
feels joy with the body.

He attains and dwells in the 3rd dhyana,
of which the noble ones declare, ‘Happily he dwells in equanimity and mindfulness.’

39 Thinking, “I’m a 3rd dhyana attainer!” *he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.*

40 *On account of his dwelling in such intimacy, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.*

(5) The 4th dhyana

41 Now, here, avuso, some person,
*with the abandoning of joy and abandoning of pain,*⁵⁹

and with the earlier disappearance of pleasure and displeasure,
he attains and dwells in **the fourth dhyana**

that is neither painful nor pleasant, and
with mindfulness fully purified by equanimity.⁶⁰

42 Thinking, “I’m a 4th dhyana attainer!” *he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.*

43 *On account of his dwelling in such intimacy, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.*

PARABLE OF THE MOUNTAIN LAKE⁶¹

44 Suppose, avuso, there were **a lake in a mountain glen**, sheltered from the wind and without any waves.⁶²

45 Now, avuso, if one were to say thus: ‘Now no waves will ever arise again here on this lake!’ — speaking thus, avuso, would one be speaking rightly?”

46 “Certainly not, avuso! It is possible, avuso, that
a violent rainstorm may come from the east [397] and stir up the waves on the lake;
a violent rainstorm may come from the west and stir up the waves on the lake;

⁵⁸ *No h’idaṃ āvuso, ṭhānaṃ hetam āvuso vijjati, amuṃ purisaṃ paṇīta, bhojanaṃ bhuttāviṃ yāvassa sā oḷā kāye ṭhassati, tāva na aññaṃ bhojanaṃ chādessati.*

⁵⁹ “Joy and pain,” *sukha-dukkha*: this refers to the physical feelings. The next phrase—“pleasure and displeasure,” *domanassa-somanassa*—refers to mental feelings, which have been transcended earlier. Mental feelings need to be overcome first so that the mind is not distracted by itself, as it were. Then, all the other feelings (arising from the physical sense-contacts) are transcended: on its significance, see **Sall’atthena S** (S 36.6/4:207-210), SD 5.5.

⁶⁰ Here, **Vibhaṅga** gives 3 factors of the 4th dhyana—*equanimity (upekhā)*, *mindfulness (sati)* and *one-pointedness of mind (cittassa ek’aggatā)*—according to the Sutta analysis (Vbh 261), and 2 factors—equanimity and one-pointedness of the mind—according to the Abhidhamma analysis (Vbh 164; Vism 4.183/165). See **Dhyana @ SD 8.4** (5.4).

⁶¹ For the same parable used to refer to the goal of awakening, see **Mahā Sakul’udāyi S** (M 77,36/2:22), SD 49.5a.

⁶² *Seyyathā’pi āvuso pabbata, saṅkhepe udaka, rahado nivāto vigata, ūmiko.*

*a violent rainstorm may come from the north and stir up the waves on the lake;
a violent rainstorm may come from the south and stir up the waves on the lake.*

47 So, too, avuso, here some person,
*with the abandoning of joy and abandoning of pain,
and with the earlier disappearance of pleasure and displeasure,
he attains and dwells in **the fourth dhyana**
that is neither painful nor pleasant, and
with mindfulness fully purified by equanimity.*

48 Thinking, “I’m a 4th dhyana attainer!” he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.

49 On account of his dwelling in such *intimacy*, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.

(6) The signless concentration of mind

50 Now, here, avuso, some person
pays no attention to all the signs⁶³ and by the ending of certain feelings,
enters and dwells in **the signless concentration of mind**,⁶⁴

51 Thinking, “I’m a **signless-concentration-of-mind attainer!**” he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.

52 On account of his dwelling in such *intimacy*, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.

PARABLE OF CRICKET SOUND

53 Suppose, avuso, a king or the royal minister, with a **four-limbed army**, had been going on the highway, and set up camp for the night in a thick wood.⁶⁵

54 Because of the sounds of elephants, horses, chariots, infantry, the bheri [conical drum], cymbals, conch-shells and the dindima [small drum], the sounds of crickets there would be drowned away.⁶⁶

55 Now, avuso, if one were to say thus: ‘Now no cricket sounds will ever arise again here on this thick wood!’—speaking thus, avuso, **[398]** would one be speaking rightly?’

56 “Certainly not, avuso! It is possible, avuso, that the king or the royal minister will leave that thick wood, and then the sounds of the crickets will return.

57 Even so, avuso, here some person
*pays no attention to all the signs and by the ending of certain feelings,
enters and dwells in **the signless concentration of mind**,*

58 Thinking, “I’m a **signless-concentration-of-mind attainer!**” he dwells intimately with monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, kings, royal ministers, sectarians and disciples of sectarians.

⁶³ “All the signs” (*sabba.nimittānaṃ*), explains Comy, refers to all signs, such as the characteristic of impermanence, and so on (AA 3:401).

⁶⁴ “The signless concentration of mind,” *animittāni ceto,samādhīni*: see (1.2.2).

⁶⁵ *Seyyathā’pi āvuso rājā vā raja,mahāmatto vā catur-aṅginiyā senāya addhāna,magga-p,paṭipanno aññataras-mim vana,saṇḍe eka,rattim vāsam upagaccheyya.*

⁶⁶ *Tattha* [Ee Se; Be Tatra] *hatthi,saddena assa,saddena ratha,saddena patti,saddena bheri,paṇava,saṅkha,tiṇava,ninnāda,saddena cirīlikā,saddo* [Ce Ee Ke Se *cīrika,saddo*] *antaradhāyeyya* [Be; Ee Se *antaradhāpeyya*]. Cf **Danta,bhūmi S** (M 125,12.13/3:133), SD 46.3; **(Catukka) Nāga S** (A 4.114/2:117), SD 46.8; **(Pañcaka) Sota S** (A 5.140/3:162), SD 46.9; **Akkhama S** (A 5.139/3:157+160), SD 91.14.

58 *On account of his dwelling in such intimacy, devoted to vulgar talk, lust corrupts his mind. With his mind corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the low life.*

Citta's departure and return

60 Then, in due course, the venerable Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta gave up the training and returned to the low life.

61 Then, Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta's companions approached the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhita, and said to the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhita:

62 'Now, was it known mind-to-mind by the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhita, thus:

"Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta thinks thus: 'Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta is an attainer of this or that state of attainment,' but then gave up the training, returned to the low life,"⁶⁷

63 or, did the deities tell this matter, thus: 'Bhante, Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta is an attainer of this or that state of attainment, but then gave up the training, returned to the low life.'?"⁶⁸

64 Avuso, it was known by me mind-to-mind, thus:

"Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta thinks thus: 'Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta is an attainer of this or that state of attainment' but then gave up the training, returned to the low life.

65 And the deities, too, told me about this matter,"⁶⁹ thus:

'Bhante, "Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta is an attainer of this or that state of attainment" but then gave up the training, returned to the low life."

66 Then, Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta's companions approached the Blessed One, saluted him, and [399] sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, they said to the Blessed One:

"Bhante, Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta is an attainer of this or that state of attainment, but then gave up the training, returned to the low life."

67 "Bhikkhus, before long Citta will think of renouncing."⁷⁰

Citta attains arhathood

68 Then, not long after, Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta, having had his hair and beard shaven off, donned the yellow robes, went forth from the home life into homelessness.

THE FULL ARHATHOOD PERICOPE⁷¹

69 Then, the venerable Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta, dwelling alone, aloof, diligent, exertive, and resolute, in no long time at all, right here and now, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge, attained and dwelled in the supreme goal of the holy life, for the sake of which sons of family rightly go forth from the household life into homelessness.

⁶⁷ From the start here: *Kim nu kho āyasmata mahā,koṭṭhitena citto hatthi,sāriputto cetasā ceto paricca vidito, imāsañ ca imāsañ ca vihara,samāpattinañ citto hatthi,sāriputto lābhī, atha ca pana sikkhañ paccakkhāya hīnā-yāvattissatīti.*

⁶⁸ *Udāhu devatā etam atthañ ārocesuñ citto bhante hatthi,sāriputto imāsañ ca imāsañ ca vihara,samāpattinañ lābhī, atha ca pana sikkhañ paccakkhāya hīnāyāvattissatīti.*

⁶⁹ "And the deities, too, told me about this matter" (*devatā pi me etam atthañ arocesuñ*). See **Pāṭika S** (D 24,-1.18/3:15×2), SD 63.3; **Cūḷā Go,siṅga S** (M 31,20.5/1:210), SD 44.11; **Mahā Vaccha,gotta S** (M 73,28.2/1:497), SD 27.4; **Citta Hatthi,sari,putta S** (A 6.60,57/3:398), SD 51.9.

⁷⁰ *Na bhikkhave citto ciram sarissati nekkhammassatī.* Comy: He will recall the virtues of renunciation (AA 3:402).

⁷¹ For details on the full arhathood pericope, see **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,56.2+56.3), SD 7.14.

THE ARHAT'S REVIEW KNOWLEDGE

70 He directly knew:

“Birth is destroyed,
the holy life has been lived,
done what is to be done,
there is no more of this state of being.”⁷²

khīṇa,jāti
vusitam brahma,cariyaṃ
kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ
nâparam itthattâyāti

And the venerable Citta Hatthi,sāri,putta became one of the arhats.

— evaṃ —

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⁷² On this para and the next (the attainment of arhathood), see **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,56.2/1:203) n, SD 7.14.